

REMARKS

Claims 1, 7-9 and 11-13 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended to incorporate the subject matter of claims 2, 3 and 5. In addition, claims 2-6 and 10 are cancelled without prejudice to, or disclaimer of, the subject matter recited therein. No new matter is added. Reconsideration and prompt allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested, at least in light of the following Remarks.

I. The Claims Define Patentable Subject Matter

The Office Action rejects claims 1-3 and 11-13 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over alleged Applicants' Admitted Prior Art (AAPA) in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0000165 to Armstrong; rejects claims 1-3 and 11-13 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Japanese Patent Application Publication No. 2002-126421 to Norihiko ("Norihiko I") in view of Armstrong; rejects claims 1-3 and 11-13 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Japanese Patent Application Publication No. 2002-126427 to Norihiko ("Norihiko II") in view of Armstrong; rejects claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Norihiko I and Armstrong in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,535,355 to Rowland; rejects claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Norihiko II and Armstrong in view of Rowland; and rejects claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Norihiko II and Armstrong, or alternatively Norihiko I, in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,021,204 to Frost et al. ("Frost"). The cancellation of claims 2-6 and 10 render the rejections of those claims moot. The rejections of the remaining claims are respectfully traversed.

The applied references, either alone or in combination, fail to disclose and would not have rendered obvious a method "wherein, at least the outer peripheral portion of the end surface of the honeycomb segment is covered with the masking material, an adhesive member comprises a base sheet and a sticky agent to be attached to at least one surface side of this base sheet, the adhesive member is bonded to the end surface of the honeycomb segment

through the sticky agent, and the base sheet is made of a heat shrinkable material which shrinks by heat in the adhesive layer drying step," as recited in amended claim 1.

In the rejection of original claim 5, the Office Action notes that none of Norihiko I, Norihiko II or Armstrong disclose a method wherein the base sheet is made from a heat shrinkable material that shrinks during the drying step. However, the Office Action asserts that Frost remedies this deficiency. Applicants disagree. In particular, Frost teaches away from a combination of a heat shrinkable sheet with an adhesive backing.

First, Frost discloses that the mask can be made from a heat shrink film, a film with a thermosetting adhesive backing or other meltable coverings in lieu of the pressure sensitive adhesive backed film (see Frost, col. 10, lines 51-60). In other words, Frost discloses that the embodiments utilizing heat shrink film and an adhesive backed film are mutually exclusive.

Second, if the heat shrink film of Frost were used in conjunction with an adhesive backed film, the heat shrink film of Frost would not function properly. In particular, Frost discloses that the mask 20 is held in position against the end face 23 by suitable means, such as an adhering material or a securing device, during a charging process (see Frost, col. 5, lines 16-19). Frost further discloses that the adhesive backed film covers the end face 23 (see Frost, col. 8, lines 23-28). Accordingly, because Frost also discloses utilizing heat shrink film in lieu of the adhesive backed film, the embodiments utilizing the heat shrink film of Frost also position the heat shrink film over the end face 23. However, if the heat shrink film of Frost were utilized with an adhesive backing, the adhesive backing would resist the shrinkage of the heat shrink film, thereby preventing the heat shrink film from sufficiently shrinking and creating an adequate adhesion between the mask 20 and the end face 23. In other words, a combination of the heat shrink film of Frost and an adhesive backing would result in poor adhesion between the honeycomb and the heat shrink film. Therefore, one of ordinary skill in

the art would have no reason for modifying Norihiko I, Norihiko II and Armstrong to include the heat shrink film of Frost. Rowland also fails to remedy the above deficiency.

Dependent claims 11-13 depend from independent claims 1. Therefore, those claims are patentable at least for their dependence from claim 1 as well as for the additional features those claims recite.

Withdrawal of the rejections is requested.

II. Rejoinder

Withdrawn claims 7-9 depend from independent claim 1. Therefore, claims 7-9 also recite all of the features of claim 1. Accordingly, rejoinder of claims 7-9 is respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Brian K. Kauffman
Registration No. 63,199

JAO:BKK/jls

Attachment:
Request for Continued Examination

Date: June 4, 2010

OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 320850
Alexandria, Virginia 22320-4850
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

**DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE
AUTHORIZATION**

Please grant any extension
necessary for entry of this filing;
Charge any fee due to our
Deposit Account No. 15-0461